



Want to put on a charrette? Let a professional tell you how MPO, DelDOT, WILMAPCO to sponsor planner training course

Planning professionals from around Delaware will gather in Dover this spring to get a little hands-on training on charrettes.

A charrette is an intensive planning process where residents, designers and planners collaborate to decide on a course of action. It provides a forum for exchanging ideas and offers a chance for immediate feedback to the designers.

Experts from the National Charrette Institute (NCI), out of Portland, Ore., will hold the three-day training session from April 25-27 in Dover. Planners will learn what charrettes are, and how they're used to involve the public in planning projects. NCI is an educational institution that specializes in collaborative community and transportation planning techniques. The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), are sponsoring the



charrettes, the various phases of a charrette, and stakeholder research, education and involvement.

Post training, the MPO and the other sponsors hope participants will recognize the benefits of employing the charrette process for regional and comprehensive planning, master planning, transportation planning and design, code and policy writing and development projects.

workshop, as urban planning, transportation planning and land use issues involve a significant public involvement component.

The training will divide participants into small groups that will learn the charrette process by using actual case studies from Delaware. Topics will include keys to meeting organization and facilitation, exercises on community values and vision, guiding principles of

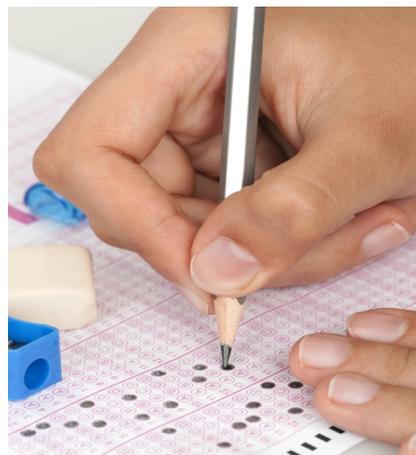


ridership survey to launch in May

This spring, the Delaware Transit Corporation, the Dover/Kent County MPO and RideShare Delaware want to find out people's travel habits between work sites in Kent County and their homes; and what it might take to get people to consider using transit.

Delaware Transit Corporation has surveyed DART riders in the past, but this time it wants to capture a segment of Kent County's population and find out how they get to work, home and places in between.

Throughout May, a survey, called, "What About DART?" will go to people



who work for various major employers in Kent County, such as state offices located in Kent County, municipal and county employees, hospital and industrial workers and more.

"DART's goal for this survey is to not only take a look at the travel habits of employees working for major employers in Kent County, but to also understand the reasons why people would choose or not choose to ride public transit rather than driving," DTC Director of Development, Ken Potts said.

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MPO welcomes new Council and TAC members



Tinari



Duca

The Dover/Kent County MPO has new members on its Council and Technical Advisory Committee.

Cheswold Mayor Donald Tinari, of Cheswold, who recently served on the Cheswold Planning Commission, recently joined the MPO Council to represent municipalities in the MPO's jurisdiction. He replaces former Camden Mayor Richard Maly.

Sharon Duca, interim public works director for the City of Dover, recently became a TAC member, replacing longtime TAC member Scott Koenig, who was recently promoted to Dover City Manager. Duca is a city engineer. She has worked for the City of Dover since 2003 in the city's Public Works department.

Look for the MPO at upcoming events

Planning to attend Dover Days, the 55-Plus Expo, or the Bug N' Bud Festival this year? If so, look for the Dover/Kent County MPO. Staff will have booths at various events starting this spring and throughout the summer, sharing information about bicycle and pedestrian safety, transportation projects, air quality information and more. Look for us at the following events:

Event	Date	Location
55+ Expo	Thursday, April 19	Dover Downs Hotel Ballroom
Earth Day Festival/ Ozone Season kickoff	Saturday, April 21	Russell Peterson Nature Center, Wilmington
Milford Bug N' Bud Festival	Saturday, April 26	Downtown Milford
Dover Days	Saturday, May 5	Legislative Mall, Dover
Kent County Safe Summer Day	Saturday, June 30	Brecknock Park , Camden
Wyoming Peach Festival	Saturday, Aug. 4	Downtown Wyoming
Amish Country Bike Tour	Saturday, Sept. 8	Check-in and vendors located on Legislative Mall, Dover

Save the date: Delaware Bike Summit set for Sept. 7

Event being held in conjunction with Amish Country Bike Tour

The 2012 Delaware Bike Summit is coming back to Dover. The Sept. 7 conference will focus on active transportation, including its health benefits and how Delawareans can make their state more bicycle friendly.

This year's summit will cover topics such as, youth encouragement, bicycle

friendly businesses, the hidden cyclist (disadvantaged communities), creating bicycle friendly communities and provide updates on the [Trails and Pathways Plan](#) and the [Dover/Kent County Bike Plan](#).

Time and location for the summit are to be determined.

This year, the summit planning committee is working with the Kent County Tourism office, as the summit will be held in conjunction with the annual Amish Country Bike Tour, to be held on Saturday, Sept. 8, starting at Legislative Mall in Dover.



SURVEY, Continued, from Pg. 1



The survey, "What About DART?" will be distributed to employees in Kent County throughout the month of May.

"Results from the survey will help us examine potential improvements or efficiencies to the service that would make DART a more attractive option for our customers."

The brief battery of questions will ask if participants ride, or have tried, DART. The survey will then

probe further to find out if there are obstacles or perceptions about transit that keep people off the bus. For instance, surveys will ask if DART is affordable, if there are bus stops near where people live, and how far people would be willing to walk or bicycle to get to and from a bus stop.

Other questions will explore personal schedules, whether or not people find DART to be a convenient transportation source, how well people understand the DART system and about bus stops in general. RideShare will include some questions about carpooling as well.

"RideShare Delaware is very excited to take part in this pilot survey for Kent County," said Sean Saffle, project manager for RideShare.

"We are hoping to learn how we can offer more affordable commuting options as gas prices continue to rise across the country."

Participating employees will be able to fill out the surveys electronically or on paper. Those who wish to provide their name and contact information will be entered in a drawing for a chance to win gift certificates from local businesses.

DART riders can use Google to get where they're going

DART is now able to offer customers trip planning services through the Google Transit network.

Simply go to DART's Website, www.DartFirstState.com, then go to the DART GOOGLE TRIP PLANNER box on the right side of the page and click on the words 'Let's Get Started.'

A drop-down menu will

appear asking visitors their starting point, destination, date and time.

Visitors should then 'click' on the 'BUS' icon for the transit option to see a map of their route.

When entering start and destination locations visitors might use an address, intersection or landmark, but should be as specific as possible. For in-

stance, if visitors simply enter the word, "McDonalds," the system will select the most recent or most often requested McDonalds location, not necessarily the specific store they want.

(Article courtesy of Delaware Transit Corporation)



DART buses secured with cameras and safety equipment



At DART, rider safety is a round-the-clock effort.

DART has fitted its fixed route and paratransit buses with digital recording cam-

eras, inside and outside. In addition, the vehicles are fitted with Bus GPS Vehicle Locators, silent alarms and radio systems.

The GPS systems are satellite based automatic vehicle locating (AVL) global positioning systems. Bus Silent Alarms are systems that, when implemented, switch the bus exterior destination sign to "Please Call 911,"

and direct the AVL system to advise DTC managers to dispatch help.

The Improved Radio System is a statewide fleet radio system that permits instant driver and DTC Dispatch Center communication, providing a more rapid response time.

Please know that riding DART is safe and secure.

(Article courtesy of DTC)



Air Quality Partnership to kick off Ozone Season at Wilmington festival

If You Go:

What: 43rd Annual Earth Day Festival

When: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 21

Where: DuPont Environmental Education Center, 1400 Delmarva Lane, Wilmington, DE 19801

For more information call: 302-656-1490

Celebrate Earth Day with the Air Quality Partnership of Delaware on Saturday, April 21, when it holds its annual Air Quality Kick-Off event at the 43rd Annual Earth Day Festival at the DuPont Environmental Education Center. The center is near the bank of the Christina River at the end of the Shipyard Shops at the Wilmington Riverfront.

The AQP of Delaware has collaborated with the Delaware Nature Society and the Delaware Environmental Education Center for this event that officially starts Ozone Season in Dela-

ware.

The family-friendly event begins at 11 a.m. and runs through 3 p.m. At 1 p.m., caped crusader, Batman, will stop by to participate in a skit and children's story time to help the Partnership present information about the importance of understanding air quality and the steps people can take to fight air pollution.

The rest of the festival will feature live music, food, vendors and all kinds of Earth friendly information.

The Air Quality Partnership is a group of citizens, public agencies, and private corporations concerned about the region's air quality. Its mission is to raise awareness and inform Delawareans about practices that improve air quality and citizen health.

On days when air quality is poor (action days), a free service called Enviroflash sends e-mail alerts for people to take measures that improve air quality. These measures include trip chaining (combining errands into one trip), taking mass transit, sharing a ride or carpooling, riding a bike, walking, not topping off the gas tank,

and refueling when it's cooler in the morning or evening.

The Partnership is comprised of Bayshore Ford, Chesapeake Utilities, the Clean Air Council, Delmarva Broadcasting, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization, DART First State, the Delaware Division of Public Health, RideShare Delaware, and the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO).

For more information about the Earth Day festival, visit the DSWA's Web site: www.DSWA.com. For more information about the Air Quality Partnership of Delaware's Ozone Season Kickoff Event or to sign up for Enviroflash e-mail alerts, please visit www.wilmapco.org/aqp.



Lowering air pollution can be easy and might even save you time and money in the process. Here are a few tips:

- 1) **Combine trips.** Have a lot of errands to run? Combine them into one trip, often called a "trip chain." This saves time, stress and reduces pollution. Starting a vehicle after it has cooled causes it to emit pollution equal to a 30 mile drive.
- 2) **Avoid topping your gas tank.** Fuel pumps automatically stop when a gas tank is full. Adding extra gas in your tank after the pump stops affects the pump's calibration system, for the next few that use the pump.
- 3) **Share a ride.** It saves gas and reduces pollution by reducing the number of vehicles on the road.
- 4) **Care for your car.** Regular tune-ups, oil changes and proper tire inflation can improve vehicle performance and reduce emissions by up to 10%.
- 5) **Fuel up at night during ozone season.** Refueling during cooler periods of the day can prevent gas fumes from heating up and creating ozone.
- 6) **Wait to mow the lawn.** If you use a gasoline powered lawn mower, wait until early evening to cut grass. Fumes are less likely to get trapped in the atmosphere than during the heat of the day.
- 7) **Walk.** It's easy to do for short trips, saves gas and is better for the air.
- 8) **Bicycle.** Keep yourself and air quality in good condition.
- 9) **Take mass transit.** When possible, do it to reduce pollution and traffic congestion.
- 10) **Spread the word.** Let others know how simple steps can make a difference.



DART using solar panels on buildings

Making use of \$1.5 million awarded to Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and TIGER grant program, the Delaware Transit Corporation has retrofitted three of its buildings with photovoltaic (PV) solar panels to save money by reducing the use fossil fuel energy.

First, the DTC modified its drivers' building. Solar panels were placed directly on the roof. The panels have an output of approximately 19 kilowatts (kwh), or more than 22 kwh of electricity.

The Dover Administration/Maintenance building system became operational on Dec. 12 and was interconnected to the grid the following day. As with any such system, the

interconnection phase includes wiring to inverters and transformers; system

1,088,840 kwh. The solar panel system will produce 230,000 kwh, or 21 percent of

sions from 31 cars.

The DTC's Wilmington solar panel system was completed this spring. Another set of panels will be applied to Wilmington's DART III building on 2nd Street, where annual electric usage is 213,000 kwh. The solar panel system at this site will produce 194,000 kwh, or approximately 97 percent of the facilities yearly usage. That's equivalent to saving 28 acres of pine trees annually.

In addition, DTC is continually making systems improvements throughout its facilities that increase operations efficiencies, while reducing power consumption so that the benefits of these installations will continue to grow. An informational kiosk will be installed at DART's Wilmington Administration Building that will show how the solar systems are working so the public can actually see the product of DTC's efforts.

(Article courtesy of DTC)



Solar panels on the roof of Delaware Transit Corporation's administration/maintenance building in Dover became operational on Dec. 12, 2011. The panels will produce 230,000 kilowatt hours per year. This saves 159 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually, roughly equal to the emissions of 31 cars. *(Photo Courtesy of DTC)*

testing and inspection before utility connection and approval. The yearly electric usage at the Dover facility is

the yearly usage. This saves 159 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually, roughly equal to the emis-



Dr. Karyl Rattay, MD., director of the Delaware Division of Public Health, left, speaks at the fourth annual Delaware Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) summit, "Impacting Obesity through Environmental and Policy Changes.

The summit was held March 22 in Dover. The day included keynote speaker Carlton Eley, who spoke about equitable development, as well as breakout sessions on system level policy changes and a panel discussion about the root causes of excess weight and obesity.

The HEAL coalition will next hold a forum, called, "Access to Healthy Communities in Delaware's Built Environment— Breaking the Barriers to Healthy Communities" from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8 at the Outlook at the Duncan Center in Dover.

Bike trail workshop scheduled in Dover May 10

With May as National Bike Month, the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) will hold a bicycle trail workshop from 4-7 p.m. on Thursday, May 10 in the council chambers of Dover City Hall. At this event, the public will have access to information and be able to share their comments about proposed projects in Kent County.

The Dover/Kent County MPO and DelDOT will present maps and informa-

tion about a proposed connector between the Silver Lake Park and Isaacs Branch bike and pedestrian trails in Dover. Maps of Dover will show the recommended alternative as to where the trail will cross U.S. 13. Proposed bike-friendly pavement and rehabilitation projects, such as the implementation of sharrows will be presented at the workshop. Sharrows are pavement markings painted onto road lanes to alert drivers to take caution and allow cyclists safe travel.

DNREC will present information about proposed trails at Killen's Pond State Park. These improvements involve

the completion of a trail gap along Killens Pond Road, linking the northern and southern park sections.

On Monday, May 14, DelDOT, DNREC and the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO) will hold a First State Trails and Pathways Plan Public Workshop from 4 to 7 p.m. at WILMAPCO in Newark. Bike Month events will take place throughout May, including the Legislator's Bike to Work ride on May 9, and Bike to Work Day on May 18. Other highlights this year include the Wilmington Grand Prix from May 18 to 20. For other bicycling related events, visit www.wilmapco.org/bikemonth.



Maps of a proposed connector between the Silver Lake Park and Isaacs Branch walk/bike trails in Dover will be on display at a May 10 workshop at Dover City Hall. The Delaware Department of Transportation and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control also will have proposed bike and pedestrian projects on display. The public will be able to receive information and share comments on this and other proposed projects.

States working to improve passenger train service

Improvements to the rail tracks, either through replacement or realignments, as well as new bridges and grade crossings are a primary focus of much of the work taking place through federal investments. Track replacement can boost the speed of passenger trains from 62 mph to 110 miles per hour cutting travel time, producing a smoother ride, and increasing reliability of service.

In Delaware, a third track is being added near Wilmington. Shailen Bhatt, secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation, said passenger rail and transit are "uniquely important to connect Delaware to the surrounding region and the nation." Along a chokepoint on the North East Corridor, the \$33.6 million project will provide more reliable service for Amtrak, intercity and commuter rail service in the area.

Improving safety is one goal of the \$23 million project to eliminate the last three remaining at grade public crossings on the Keystone corridor in Pennsylvania. Once completed in 2013, trains between the state capital of Harrisburg, and in Philadelphia will be able to operate at higher speeds and reduce travel times for passengers.

A program, called Rail to the Fair, started in 1992

by the Delmarva Rail Passenger Association in partnership with the Delaware Railroad Administration (DRA).

DelDOT and the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC) sponsored the program the following year. In 1995, DRA merged into

Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington. Later, trains picked up passengers in Philadelphia as well as Newark, Middletown and Wyoming, Del. Each trip included an extended rail fan trip south to Georgetown, Millsboro, Frankford, Laurel or Seaford, depend-

trak within the interlocking, giving these trains a clear path to Penn Station.

In Missouri, the state is purchasing new right of way for a \$28.3 million project to build a second rail bridge over the Osage River that will eliminate the last single track portion between Jefferson City and St. Louis. The project will also increase the capacity for freight movement in this corridor.

Chronic delays to Amtrak's California Zephyr trains that travel across Iowa between Chicago and San Francisco will be reduced by the installation of four remotely controlled high-speed crossovers in Osceola and Afton, Iowa. Once

the \$17.3 million project is completed in 2013, passenger trains can move

around slower moving coal and freight trains.

In Texas, the BNSF Fort Worth Sub Crossing Signal Improvements project received \$3.7 million in final design/construction funds. The project will adjust signal timing over 63 miles and reduce travel time on the Texas portion of Amtrak's Heartland Flyer by more than 15 minutes by increasing travel speeds from 49 mph to 79 mph between Fort Worth and Gainesville, Texas.

(Article courtesy of AASHTO)



An Amish buggy waits in 2004 at a railroad crossing in Wyoming, as a Rail to the Fair train passes. (Photo courtesy of the Delaware Transit Corporation)

DTC. The Delmarva Rail Passenger Association (DRPA) remained an active volunteer supporter of Rail to the Fair until the excursion's last trip in 2007. Financial constraints were the major reason that ended the popular excursion. Although the first excursion nearly broke even cost-wise, future trips did not. Each station stop added to the financial burden and the addition of a food service car, though a welcomed amenity, also added to the overall cost.

Initially, trains stopped in Claymont and Wilmington on their way to the

ing on the route.

One of the more significant efforts to address congestion and improve on-time performance and reliability for Amtrak's Northeast Corridor service is the Harold Interlocking project under way by the New York State Department of Transportation. The interlocking is a complex two-mile stretch of signals and switches in Queens, serving 783 trains each weekday, 136 of which are Amtrak trains that operate between Boston and Washington. The \$368 million project will construct grade-separated routes for Am-

Committees, council to meet in April and May

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Advisory and Public Advisory committees both have meetings scheduled for April.

TAC members met at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 11 in the council chambers of Camden Town Hall, 1783 Friends Way, Camden. PAC members will meet at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 24 at the Harrington Senior Center, 102 Fleming St., Harrington.

The MPO Council will meet at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9 at Camden Town Hall.

In observance of Memorial Day, the MPO office will be closed on Monday, May 28.

Public comment period opens on MPO budget

The Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization has opened a 30-day public comment period for its annual budget, known as the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), for FY2013. The comment period runs from April 4 to May 4, 2012.

The upcoming budget, which becomes effective July 1, is more than \$550,000, part of which is marked for several planning studies that coordinate transportation and land use in Kent County. The MPO's policy-making body, the MPO Council, is scheduled to vote on the UPWP at its May 9 meeting, which will be held in the council chambers of Camden Town Hall. If approved, the budget goes to the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration and the Delaware Department of Transportation for review and approval.

To view the UPWP, please visit the MPO's Web site at www.doverkentmpo.org, or call the office at (302) 387-6026 or (302) 387-6030 to request a copy.

The Dover/Kent County MPO is going Green



To save paper and postage, the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization would like to deliver its newsletter, Journeys, via the Internet. Please contact the MPO at kate.layton@doverkentmpo.org, or at (302) 387-6026 and tell us if you prefer to receive Journeys via e-mail, or the U.S. Postal Service. Thanks for helping the MPO's efforts to be earth conscious. Go green!

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